

Alabama Commission on Higher Education

PROPOSAL FOR A NEW DEGREE PROGRAM – NEW APPLICATION TOOL

Please check one: ☐ Baccalaureate Program ☒ Graduate Program

A. General Information

1. **Institution:** Auburn University at Montgomery
2. **Institutional Contact Person:**
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3. **Program Identification**
Field of Study/ Program Title: Nursing
Degree: Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
CIP Code: 51.3801
4. **Date of Proposal Submission:**
May 19, 2017
5. **Proposed Program Implementation Date:**
August, 2018
6. **Program Administration:**
Name of College/School: Auburn University at Montgomery
Name of Dean: Jean D'Meza Leuner PhD., RN, CNE, FAAN
Name of Department: Nursing
Name of Chair: Jean D'Meza Leuner Ph.D., RN, CNE, FAAN

B. Program Purpose and Description

- 1. In no more than one paragraph describe the purpose of the proposed program. Please also include a brief statement regarding how the program's purpose is related to the University's mission and goals.**

The purpose of this proposal is to establish a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Degree Program at Auburn University at Montgomery to better serve the needs of our students and the community. This program directly relates to the University's mission and goals. Specifically it relates to AUM's first goal, "Enhance academic quality and program development reinforced by scholarship" and sub goal IA "Develop and sustain nationally recognized academic programs." Across Alabama and the River Region there is a need for access to healthcare providers, particularly in rural areas. Alabama's Office of Primary Care and Rural Health lists 55 of the state's 67 counties as rural, and all 67 of the counties have been designated as either Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) or Medically Underserved Populations (MUPS) by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The AUM MSN program will have two tracks: the preparation of Family Nurse Practitioners (FNP) and Nurse Educators for Interprofessional Practice.

Family nurse practitioners (FNP) are graduate-educated, nationally-certified and state-licensed advanced-practice registered nurses (APRNs) who work autonomously or in collaboration with other healthcare professionals to deliver family-focused care. FNP's care for medically stable patients across the lifespan, from infants to geriatric patients. In areas of the state, particularly rural and urban areas where physician shortages are persistent and prevalent, FNP's are the sole healthcare providers in nurse practitioner-led clinics. According to the American Medical Colleges (AAMC), physician shortages may reach between 46,000 and 90,000 by 2025. Within this shortfall, it has been projected that between 12,500 and 31,100 will be in primary care.

The AUM Nurse Educators for Interprofessional Practice Program will be a state-of-the-art program to prepare nurses to be teachers in a healthcare environment that requires the continuous development of interprofessional competency by health-professions students and students in other professional fields as part of the learning process.

- 2. Please provide a description of the specific kinds of employment opportunities, post-graduate professional degree programs, and other graduate programs that will be available to the graduates.**

Graduates will be eligible for certification examination by the American Nurses' Credentialing Center (ANCC) and to practice as nurse practitioners in a variety of clinical sites such as: community clinics, health departments, physicians' offices, clinics and hospitals, health maintenance organizations, urgent care settings in correctional facilities, Armed Forces and Veterans' Administration facilities, clinicians in primary and secondary school settings, nurse researchers in collaboration with other health care professionals, and as expert nurse

consultants to businesses, schools, and corporations. Graduates from the Nurse Educator for Interprofessional Practice Program will be eligible for the Certification for Nurse Educators (CNE) certification examination by the National League for Nursing. Graduates can teach in colleges and universities, healthcare settings, schools, public and private healthcare businesses, agencies, and clinics. Nurse educators are also being hired by pharmaceutical companies and they serve as consultants.

Graduates from both programs may continue their education and pursue a Doctor of Nursing Practice, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctorate in Education, Public Health, or other related doctoral degree.

3. Succinctly list at least four (4) but no more than seven (7) of the most prominent *student learning outcomes* of the program. These outcomes should lend themselves to subsequent review and assessment of program accomplishments.

Each of the following program outcomes has been developed to reflect the professional standards articulated by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) in *The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (2011). This document includes nine standards, which have been synthesized in this proposal to compose the learning outcomes. The *Essentials* document identifies and describes the standards for program design and evaluation by both internal and external reviewers.

1. Initiate communication and collaboration with patients, patients' support networks and healthcare professionals to design, coordinate, implement and evaluate delivery of patient care.
(Essential II and VII)

2. Utilize informatics and communication technologies to enhance patient education, expand accessibility of care, analyze performance measures, and improve outcomes.
(Essential III, V, and VIII)

3. Apply advanced concepts in the care of diverse populations through systematic assessment of actual and potential risks in multiple care environments.
(Essential I, II, and VIII)

4. Utilize clinical judgment, evidence-based findings and theory in delivery of health care to improve access, equity, efficiency, and social justice.
(Essential I, IV, VI, VIII, and IX)

5. Develop strategies for lifelong learning and interprofessional collaboration that integrate professional standards, guidelines, statutes, regulations, and accountability in coordination of care.
(Essential V, VI, VII, and IX)

6. Recognize global factors to intervene and advocate for health promotion, clinical prevention, and disease management.
(Essential I, VI, VIII, and IX)

7. Provide ethical, culturally sensitive, patient-centered care based on epidemiological, social and environmental data to improve health status.
(Essential VI, VIII, and IX)

C. Need for the Program

1. State need. Briefly describe why the program is specifically needed for the State of Alabama. (State need is considered a priority in the review process.)

All 67 counties across Alabama are designated a medically underserved area (MUA), a medically underserved population (MUP), or both by HRSA. This designation is assigned when either the healthcare providers, both family and/or primary care are not readily available within the county (HRSA, 2015). In 2016, Alabama was designated the fourth poorest state in the nation (Alabama Possible, 2016).

The MUP designation indicates that the population within the county faces problems that further contribute to a lower ability to access care, such as extreme poverty, homelessness, low health literacy, a larger number of elderly, and a high infant mortality rate (HRSA, 2015). Forty-nine percent of infants and toddlers in the South live in low-income families, which further impacts their ability receive acute, maintenance, and preventive care. Alabama is fourth in the nation for statistically significant food insecurity rates, which also contributes to growth and development risks for infants and toddlers (Feeding America, 2015). Currently 298,000 Alabama children are living in poverty (Alabama News Service, 2015). Alabama is currently ranked 45th for overall child well-being (Alabama News Service, 2015). Hispanic children are three times more likely to live in poverty (Alabama Possible, 2016). Family Nurse Practitioners are educated to provide safe, culturally sensitive, effective, efficient, preventive, and patient centered care in these designated counties for all populations.

Alabama's former Governor Bentley formed the Alabama Health Care Improvement Task Force to address concerns related to advanced-practice registered nurses' scope of practice. The establishment of such a group with specific direction emphasizes the need and importance of the role advanced practice nurses assume in meeting the healthcare needs of the citizens of Alabama. The need for nurse practitioners locally, regionally and nationally was addressed by David Auerbach PhD and colleagues at the RAND Corporation when they used a statistical model to predict the growing need for nurse practitioners. Study results indicated that the need for nurse practitioners would increase 94% from 128,000 in 2008 to 244,000 by 2025 in the U.S. (Auerbach et.al, 2014).

According to the 2016-2017 data from the American Association of Nursing 9,757 qualified applicants were turned away from graduate nursing programs at the

master's level (Fang, Li, Kennedy & Trautman, 2017). Of the 9,757, there were 6,905 qualified applicants for nurse practitioner programs who were not admitted in 2016-17.

A major reason for turning away qualified applicants at all degree levels is the shortage of nursing faculty (AACN, 2016). The average age of faculty in Alabama is 50 years. The shortage of nursing faculty prevents expanding the nursing workforce and meeting the healthcare demands for registered nurses. Graduates of this master's program will be qualified to hold faculty positions in nursing programs at community colleges and baccalaureate programs. In the nursing discipline in particular, the concern should not be on duplication of programs but rather the availability of programs to prepare qualified nurse practitioners and educators to meet the healthcare needs of the state and nation.

2. Employment Opportunities. Based on your research on the employment market for graduates of this program, please complete the following table reporting the total projected job openings (including both growth and replacement demands) in your local area, the state, the SREB region, and the nation. These job openings should represent positions that require graduation from a program such as the one proposed.

Career and College Readiness/Preparation -- Projected Job Openings

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Local	30	30	30	30	30	150
State	125	125	125	125	125	625
SREB	55,670	55,670	55,670	55,670	55,670	278,350
Nation	126,900	126,900	126,900	126,900	126,900	634,500

Please briefly describe your methodology for determining employment opportunities – projected job openings. Be sure to cite any data sources used in formulating these projections. The actual survey instrument, detailed results, and associated data file(s) must be maintained internally by the institution for five years from the implementation date. The survey upon which the proposal is based must be available for ACHE Staff examination upon request for that five-year timeframe. The survey instrument, detailed results, or associated data file(s) should not be included in the proposal.)

A search of current job openings as well as government-collected data was conducted. The United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2015) estimates there will be a 31% increase in employment opportunities for advanced practice nurses from 2014 to 2024. Some of the reasons for the increased need for advanced practice nurses include the number of medically underserved areas across the country, the aging population, more

individuals with healthcare insurance, and an ongoing effort to prevent disease processes (2015).

Job searches were conducted using a variety of search engines such as www.indeed.com and www.monster.com with the key terms “Nurse Practitioner” and “Family Nurse Practitioner” for Alabama and contiguous states which resulted in between 200-1650 job openings for positions with a salary range from \$80,000 to \$130,000. While social media sites provided information to validate the need for nurse practitioners within the SREB states, the position descriptions on these for-profit sites were not specific and did not address significant issues such as degree, national certification, or experience. Job projections based on actual data through the Alabama Department of Labor and Projections Central: State Occupational Projections were a more credible source of data to assist in determining employment opportunities. The Alabama Department of Labor Workforce Information on Nurse Practitioners, in the 2014 Alabama Licensed Occupation Guide, projected an annual growth of 2.77% and 2.94% nationally. Entry salary of \$62,747.00, an average salary of \$88,318.00 and a maximum of \$101,104.00 for an experienced nurse practitioner.

At this time, there are 220,000 Certified Registered Nurse Practitioners (CRNPs) certified and licensed to practice in the United States. According to the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (2016), 83.4% practice in primary care and of these 55.1% practice family care.

A study conducted by the Southern Regional Board of Education (SREB) in 2002 indicated a serious shortage of nurse faculty in all 16 SREB states and the District of Columbia. Their findings indicated that the combination of faculty vacancies (432) and newly budgeted positions (350) pointed to a 12% shortfall of nurse educators. The faculty shortage has been related to unfilled positions, resignations, retirements, and the shortage of students prepared for the faculty role. Searching for job opening using search engines revealed between 50-400 open nursing faculty positions within the SREB states. There is no state nursing center for the collection of supply and demand data in Alabama such as is found in other states such as Florida. The Health Workforce Technical Assistance Center reported on their website that they acquired data from 32 states collecting data and 19 not collecting data; Alabama was one of the 19 with no data collection plan resulting in no response. Lack of current, relevant health workforce data is a concern in order to meet the needs for educators to improve the pipeline of applicants for nursing school and practitioners needed to provide access to healthcare within Alabama.

State specific data were obtained from the Alabama Department of Labor website at the following link:

<http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/Projections/Occupational/Statewide/Detail.pdf>

In addition, the following website was utilized for state data:

<http://www.projectionscentral.com/Home/Index>

Data from all SREB states were reviewed for nurse practitioner job openings.

3. Student Demand - Enrollment projection. Please briefly describe your methodology for determining enrollment projections. If a survey of student interest was conducted, please briefly describe the survey instrument, number and percentage of respondents, and summary of results.

In order to assess our current student interest in a MSN degree a student interest survey of current AUM nursing students was conducted in May 2017. Results from the survey indicated that approximately 60% plan to pursue a graduate degree as a family nurse practitioner.

In an effort to assess state need and interest in graduate education, the list of all nurses in Alabama was purchased from the Alabama State Nurse Association. The list contained 1500 names and from those, a random sample of 500 was selected to mail a needs assessment survey instrument with 17 questions. Each survey included a stamped envelope for ease of returning the survey. Of the 500 mailed surveys, (195) 39% were returned. Of those returned, (71) 36% indicated a desire to attend a MSN program to prepare nurse practitioners and (25)13% requested a nurse educator MSN program. Family Nurse Practitioner was the most selected option among all nurse practitioner options on the survey.

(The survey instrument, and associated data file(s) need not be included in the proposal. This proposal information should be maintained for ACHE Staff review for five years from the actual implementation date.)

D. Specific Rationale (Strengths) for Program

What is the specific rationale (strengths) for recommending approval of this proposal? List no fewer than three (3) and no more than five (5) potential program strengths.

1. AUM is located in the Black Belt region of Alabama and it includes some of the poorest counties in the United States. Along with the high rates of poverty, there is a high rate of unemployment, poor access to medical care and education, substandard housing, and high crime rates. Montgomery County, along with all remaining counties, has been designated as a medically underserved area. The citizens of this region deserve access to healthcare from well-qualified providers. Nurse practitioners are needed in this region and FNP advanced-practice nurses are prepared to care for the entire family. AUM is focused on meeting the needs of the underserved citizens in this region of Alabama.
2. The tuition for graduate students at AUM is more affordable than most state universities in Alabama. The tuition for AUM is close to the median level when examining state school graduate tuition per semester hour. This graduate program will provide a more economical option for students in pursuit of a graduate degree. The online tuition does not increase for out of state students, which makes AUM a financially attractive option for graduate students.
3. The local and regional community of interest (composed of healthcare agencies, chief nursing officers, physicians, and current nursing students) is

requesting delivery of a graduate nursing program at AUM to prepare nurse practitioners and nurse educators. AUM has an excellent relationship with clinical sites and well-qualified preceptors for students' teaching-learning needs.

4. The AUM School of Nursing has a solid reputation for producing quality graduates. AUM nursing faculty have been teaching in the accredited Joint AU/AUM master's program since 2006 and are well-prepared to offer a quality MSN program at AUM.
5. The proposed program will be administered by faculty who are academically and experientially prepared to teach graduate students. They are strong faculty members who have a track record of positive student-outcomes and who excel in the areas of teaching, practice, scholarship and service.

Please note that letters of support may be included with the proposal.

E. Similar Programs

Using the ACHE Academic Program inventory found at

<http://www.ache.state.al.us/Content/Departments/Instruction/StudentInfo.aspx>

List below all programs at the same degree level (by institution) that utilize the same 6-digit CIP code as the one being requested in the program proposal.

Also, list any programs at other CIP codes that may be offering similar instruction.

If there are no similar programs place a "0/none" by 1. in the listing directly below.

Note: Institutions should consult with ACHE Staff during the NISP phase of proposal development to determine what existing programs are considered duplicative of the proposed program.

The following institutions offer similar programs at this level:

1. Troy University
2. University of North Alabama
3. Jacksonville State University
4. University of South Alabama
5. University of Alabama, Birmingham
6. University of Alabama, Huntsville
7. University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa

Please add numeration and list additional similar programs, if applicable.

If the program duplicates, closely resembles, or is similar to another program already offered in the State, provide justification for that duplication.
Also, if a graduate program, please identify and list any similar programs at institutions in other SREB states.

SREB State	College/University	Propriety Status
Arkansas	Arkansas State University-Jonesboro	Public
	University of Arkansas-Fayetteville	Public
Delaware	Widener University	Private
District of Columbia	George Washington University	Public
	Catholic University	Private
Florida	Barry University	Private
	Florida State University	Public
	Florida Atlantic University	Public
	University of South FL	Public
	University of Central FL	Public
	University of FL	Public
	University of West FL	Public
	University of North FL	Public
Georgia	Augusta University	Public
	Emory University	Private
	Mercer University	Private
	South University	Private
Kentucky	University of Kentucky	Public
	Eastern Kentucky University	Public
	Frontier Nursing University	Private
	Murray State	Public
	Western Kentucky University	Public
	Bellarmino University	Private
Louisiana	University of Louisiana-Lafayette	Public
	Louisiana State University-Health Sciences Center	Public
	Northwestern University	Public
	Southeastern Louisiana University	Public
	Southern University at Baton Rouge	Public
Maryland	Coppin State University	Private
	Johns Hopkins University	Private
	Salisbury University	Public
	University of Baltimore-Baltimore City	Public
Mississippi	Delta State University	Public

SREB State	College/University	Propriety Status
	Mississippi University for Women	Private
	University of Mississippi Medical Center	Public
	University of Southern Mississippi	Public
	Delta State University	Public
North Carolina	Western Carolina University	Public
	Winston Salem State University	Public
	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill	Public
	University of North Carolina-Charlotte	Public
	University of North Carolina-Greensboro	Public
	University of North Carolina-Wilmington	Public
	Duke University	Private
	East Carolina University	Public
	Gardner-Webb University	Private
Oklahoma	University of Oklahoma Health Science Center	Public
South Carolina	University of South Carolina	Public
	Medical University of South Carolina	Public
Tennessee	University of Tennessee-Chattanooga	Public
	University of Tennessee-Health Science Center	Public
	University of Tennessee-Knoxville	Public
	East Tennessee State University	Public
Texas	Baylor University	Private
	Baylor College of Medicine	Private
	Prairie View A&M University	Public
	Texas University-Corpus Christie	Public
	Texas Christian University	Public
	Texas Tech University-Health Sciences Center	Public
	Texas Women's University	Public
	University of Texas-Arlington	Public
	University of Texas-Austin	Public
	University of Texas-El Paso	Public
	University of Texas-Health	Public

SREB State	College/University	Propriety Status
	Science Center Houston	
	University of Texas Health Science Center- San Antonio	Public
	University of Texas Medical Branch	Public
	University of the Incarnate Word	Private
Virginia	Virginia Commonwealth University	Public
	Liberty University	Private
	Marymount University	Private
	Radford University	Private
	James Madison University	Public
	George Mason University	Public
West Virginia	West Virginia University	Public
	Shephard University	Public

F. Collaboration with Other Institutions/Agencies

Does the institution plan on collaborating with other institutions in the delivery of this program?

☐ Yes No ☒

If yes, please indicate below which institutions and describe the basis of this collaboration.

If no, please indicate your reasons why.

AUM has the faculty, infrastructure and the community support in order to provide a graduate nursing program. At this time there is no need to collaborate with other programs.

G. Curriculum

1. Program Completion Requirements: (Enter a credit hour value for all applicable components, write N/A if not applicable)

Credit hours required in major courses	42-45
Credit hours required in minor	N/A
Credit hours in institutional general education or core curriculum	24
Credit hours required in support courses	20-21
Credit hours in required or free electives	N/A
Credit hours for thesis or dissertation	N/A
Total credit hours required for completion	42-45

2. Will this program be related to other programs at your institution?

No

If so, which ones and how?

3. Please identify any existing program, option, concentration or track that this program will replace at your institution.

This independent MSN Program will replace the joint MSN Program that AUM has shared with Auburn. On April 7, 2017, the Auburn Board of Trustees approved the dissolution of the Joint AU/AUM Master of Science in Nursing Program and independent proposals for stand-alone programs at both schools. The request for dissolution is not a sign that the program has been unsuccessful; rather it is a result of the evolution of the program and faculties. The joint MSN program has seen an overall increase in enrollment and graduation numbers since its inception and graduated a record class this past academic year. The faculties at Auburn and at AUM have both grown over the years and resources are currently sufficient to support independent programs. Furthermore, with the new budget model in place for Auburn combined with the fact that AUM has not changed its budget model it is difficult for the joint program to continue without significant administrative difficulties.

A teach-out plan has been put into place by the Auburn and AUM deans that will guarantee a smooth transition from admittance of the last joint MSN student to admittance of the first students in independent MSN programs. The teach-out plan will provide for the equitable treatment of all affected graduate students with minimal disruption of their degree completion plans.

4. Is it likely that this program will reduce enrollments in other graduate programs at your institution? If so, please explain.

No

5. If this is a graduate program, please list any existing undergraduate programs at the institution, which are directly or indirectly related to the proposed graduate program. If this is a doctoral proposal, also list related master's programs at your institution.

This graduate nursing program will provide current nursing students in the Registered Nurse (RN) to Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing (BSN) and the traditional BSN program at AUM with an accessible and seamless option to continue their education. Enrolled students in the AUM Undergraduate Nursing Program will be provided with an opportunity to enroll in 9 credits of graduate coursework prior to matriculation in the graduate program. Graduate courses taken by current undergraduate students will be accepted for graduate credit program once students have been accepted into the MSN program.

6. Please complete the table below indicating the proposed program's courses. Include the course number, and number of credits. (If feasible/useful, please group courses by sub-headings within the table.)

Course Number and Title	Number of Credit Hours	* If New Course
CORE COURSES FOR MSN		
NURS 6340 Theory for Advanced Nursing Practice	3	
NURS 6120 Advancing Quality, Safety & Prevention	3	
NURS 6440 Translating Evidence into Practice	3	
NURS 6250 Ethics, Legal Issues & Health Policy	3	
NURS 6550 Professional Transition to Advanced Practice Nursing	3	
NURS 6610 Advanced Physiology/Pathophysiology	3	
NURS 6620 Advanced Physical Assessment	2	
NURS 6621 Advanced Physical Assessment Clinical (60 hours)	1	
NURS 6630 Pharmacotherapeutics for Advanced Practice	3	
FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER COURSES		
NURS 7110 Adolescent/Adult Primary Care	2	
NURS 7111 Adolescent/Adult Primary Care Clinical (180 hours)	3	
NURS 7210 Women's Health Primary Care	2	
NURS 7211 Women's Health Primary Care Clinical (60 hours)	1	
NURS 7310 Pediatric Primary Care	3	
NURS 7311 Pediatric Primary Care Clinical (120 hours)	2	
NURS 7410 Adult/Gerontologic Primary Care	3	
NURS 7411 Adult/Gerontologic Primary Care Clinical (120 hours)	2	
NURS 7911 Advanced Practice Nurse Practicum (180)	3	
NURSE EDUCATOR FOR INTERPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE COURSES		
NURS 7510 Interprofessional Educator Roles & Competencies	3	*
NURS 7530 Innovations in Clinical Teaching & Evaluation	1	*
NURS 7520 Instructional Design for Interprofessional Education	3	*
NURS 7540 Innovative Curricula in Interprofessional Education	3	*
NURS 7550 Using Quality Assessment & Evaluation Strategies	2	*
NURS 7560 Program Evaluation & Accreditation	2	*
NURS 7570 Exam Construction & Analysis	2	*
NURS 7941 Nurse Educator Practicum for Interprofessional Practice (Immersion Project)	4	

7. Enumerate and briefly describe any additional requirements such as preliminary qualifying examination, comprehensive examination, thesis,

dissertation, practicum or internship, some of which may carry credit hours included in the list above.

All master's degree programs in nursing that prepare graduates for roles with a component of direct-care practice are required to have graduate level content/coursework in pathophysiology, health assessment and pharmacology. In addition, all graduates must have supervised practice experiences that are sufficient to demonstrate mastery of the *Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (AACN, 2011). MSN Advanced-practice students are required to have 500 hours of supervised practice. Both the Family Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator tracks include the theory and required clinical hours specified by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, the accrediting body for baccalaureate and higher education.

8. Does the program include any options/concentration. If so, please describe the purpose and rationale and list the courses in the option.

There are two options in this MSN proposal: Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Nurse Educator (NE) for Interprofessional Practice. Family Nurse Practitioners are advanced practice registered nurses who work autonomously or in collaboration with other healthcare professionals to deliver family focused care. FNP's offer a wide range of healthcare services that revolve around the family unit, from health promotion and disease prevention to direct care and counseling across the lifespan. AUM is proposing to offer an FNP track with the breadth and depth of content and practice in this specialty that directly correlates with the healthcare needs in Alabama. Alabama's need for this program is directly related to the fact that 55 of the state's 67 counties have been designated as rural and all counties are designated as medically underserved areas by the US Department of Health and Human Services. The courses that are required for FNP students are noted in the table above. All students will take the MSN core courses and the FNP specialty courses.

The Nurse Educator for Interprofessional Practice program is proposed due to the extreme shortage of nursing faculty locally, regionally and nationally. NSI Nursing Solutions Inc. published the 2016 National Healthcare Retention & RN Staffing Report that states, "RN vacancies continue to trend negatively with a third (32.9%) of the hospitals reporting a vacancy rate of 10% or greater. This is up from 4.8% in 2012" (p.6). According to Juraschek and colleagues (2012) who developed a *United States Registered Nurse Workforce Report Card and Shortage Forecast*, the registered nurse shortage in the US will continue to grow with the need for 1.2 million nurses by 2020; the RN shortage will be the most intense in the southern and western parts of the US.

As colleges and universities continue to turn away well-qualified applicants, nurse educators are needed to prepare the next generation of nurse leaders. In response to the need for more well-prepared nurses, AUM proposes to offer a unique program to prepare nurse educators for interprofessional practice. The AUM Nurse Educator Program has been designed to focus on interprofessional practice, which is critical for today's nurse. Interprofessional education (IPE) is

recognized as a significant approach for preparing health professions students to provide patient care in a collaborative team environment. This cutting edge approach for the preparation of nursing faculty will be unique to AUM as no other program has the IPE core competencies integral to the preparation of faculty members. Faculty members are needed for all levels of nursing education; the AUM program will prepare educators for faculty positions and educator positions in healthcare agencies and business. The nurse educator courses are listed in the previous table; all students will take the MSN core courses and the educator specialty courses.

State and list if the program has any special admission requirements. If none, state: “The program has no special admission requirements”.

Admission to the MSN Program will be based on an overall appraisal of the ability to undertake master’s education. Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended will be reviewed for coursework and for a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale. Successful applicants will have an unrestricted Registered Nurse License and submit both three satisfactory letters of recommendation and a writing sample. All applicants must participate in an admission interview, complete required application forms and meet deadlines for admission. Applicants will be required to have current CPR certification, malpractice insurance, and required immunizations. There are no qualifying exams and admission test scores (such as the GRE or MAT) are not required.

The interview process will take into consideration the ability to articulate career goals, cultural awareness and sensitivity and critical thinking abilities. Evidence of leadership and interpersonal skills will also be assessed. An admission rubric has been developed to facilitate the holistic admission process.

H. Program Review and Assessment

In the final analysis, the institution and its governing board are accountable for the quality, utility and productivity of this and all other programs of instruction.

With this in mind, please describe the procedures that will be used in assessing the program’s outcomes.

Be sure to include:

1. An assessment process for the student learning outcomes;

Evaluation of the MSN program will be consistent with the systematic evaluation plan that has been approved by the faculty in the AUM School of Nursing for existing programs. The evaluation plan delineates specific evaluation data to be collected and analyzed according to an annual timeline and review process. Specific data points are required according to the Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs (2013) published by CCNE. Specific data points include: program completion rates, national certification pass

rates, employment rates, graduate perception of program quality, and alumni perception of program quality.

Data collected from the MSN Program will be reviewed by the faculty and used to modify teaching and revise the curriculum as appropriate. The Evaluation Committee will facilitate collection and collation of data for review by the Curriculum Committee. Discussions of the Curriculum Committee in consultation with MSN course faculty will result in the identification of curricular issues of concern and revision. Formal review of the curriculum is specified in the evaluation plan and specific course and program data that is reviewed on a regular basis can result in curricular changes.

In addition, data related to program outcomes from new graduates and alumni are collected and aggregated through Skyfactor (formerly Educational Benchmarking Institute) for generating aggregate data on program outcomes. Skyfactor provides each school/college data in comparison to a group of comparable institutions, Carnegie Class Institutions, and all institutions participating in the survey. The data each school receives from Skyfactor has been mapped against the AACN Essentials allowing schools to determine how well respondents are prepared to meet each of the nine Essentials. The Skyfactor survey is disseminated via email and numerous reminder emails are sent to graduates to encourage their participation in the survey.

An annual report will provide a summary of data related to key program outcomes. This report is utilized for accreditation purposes and it will be provided to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education for the first five years of the program.

2. A follow-up plan to determine accomplishments of graduates such as obtaining relevant employment or being admitted to a masters or doctoral program (graduate or professional).

Data will be collected annually from the MSN graduates regarding their place of employment, accomplishments and other relevant data such as publications, certifications and enrollment in additional graduate programs. After students complete the program, the School of Nursing will request from students current contact information including email addresses. A survey will be disseminated to graduates six months after graduation and three years after graduation. Student information is also acquired and shared via social media and at professional meetings.

I. Accreditation

If there is a recognized (USDE or CHEA) or other specialized accreditation agency for this program, please identify the agency and explain why you do or not plan to seek accreditation. If there is no accrediting or similar body for this degree program state as such in your response.

The AUM School of Nursing will seek accreditation for the MSN program from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), an autonomous national accrediting body for baccalaureate and graduate nursing education programs. CCNE accreditation ensures the quality and integrity of nursing programs and AUM is committed to quality and external accountability in their educational programs. The Joint AU/AUM MSN program's current CCNE accreditation will continue until students complete the program teach-out plan. Since the Joint AU/AUM MSN Program has successfully achieved CCNE accreditation and AUM's undergraduate program is accredited by CCNE, we anticipate similar success when we pursue this accreditation for an independent MSN Program.

J. Instructional Delivery Method

1. Describe which instructional delivery methods will be utilized in delivering this program.

Distance education will be used as the primary mode of course delivery. The clinical component of the FNP curriculum is delivered with the assistance of a clinical preceptor for patient contact supporting experiential learning. The faculty oversight of student and clinical content will be achieved with scheduled site visits throughout the semester.

2. If distance technology is being utilized, indicate an approximate percent of the total program's courses offered that will be provided by distance education.

It is anticipated that 90% or more will be provided online. In the FNP Program, students will come to campus periodically for an intensive experience to validate course competencies. They will also come to campus at the end of their program of studies to complete exit examinations. Nurse Educator students will complete the program 100% online.

3. If distance education is not being utilized, please explain why not.

N/A

K. Resource Requirements

1. Faculty. Do not attach the curriculum vitae of each existing or additional faculty members to this proposal. (The institution must maintain and have current and additional primary and support faculty curriculum vitae available upon ACHE request for as long as the program is active.) Please do provide a brief summary of Faculty and their qualifications specific to the program proposal.

Eleven full-time and 11 part-time faculty are available for the proposed program and many have been teaching in the existing Joint AU/AUM Master's Program. The faculty include those with experience as nurse practitioners and nurse

educators and administrators, all of whom are academically and experientially prepared for the faculty positions they hold. Several nurse practitioner faculty members continue to maintain a clinical practice.

It should be noted that AUM has recently hired two new Nursing faculty members (included in the count above) who will be able to teach in the program; however, these faculty were not hired for the purpose to teach in the proposed MSN program, rather they were hired to support the undergraduate nursing program. After they have transitioned into their new roles, it is possible they will teach in the MSN program if approved. It is also anticipated that there will be two departures from the current faculty within the next year (included in the count above). These faculty will be replaced with faculty that can support both the undergraduate program and the proposed MSN program. The following faculty bios come from those Nursing faculty currently on staff at AUM who are expected to teach in the proposed MSN program.

Jean D'Meza Leuner, PhD., RN, CNE, FAAN
Ph.D., Boston College, 1994
MSN, Boston College, 1979
BSN, Seton Hall University, 1975
Diploma in Nursing, St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing, 1972

Bio and Research Interests: Dr. Leuner is Dean and Professor in the School of Nursing. She has close to 30 years of experience in graduate education and administration. She has been a nursing dean for 15 years and has experience opening a DNP, PhD, and two MSN programs that are thriving today. She has taught all levels of nursing students and she is the recipient of numerous awards and recognition for her leadership, teaching and service to the profession. Her area of expertise is program development and evaluation. She has conducted research related to quality of life, social support and educational research.

Julie C. Freeman, DNP, ACNP-BC, MSN
DNP, University of South Alabama, 2012
MSN Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, University of South Alabama, 2011
MSN Nurse Educator, Auburn/Auburn University Montgomery, 2011
BSN, Auburn University at Montgomery, 2008
Diploma of Nursing, Providence School of Nursing, Mobile, 1978

Bio and Research Interests: Dr. Freeman is an Assistant Professor and Program Director for the CONHS RN to BSN and Graduate Programs. She is a certified registered nurse practitioner licensed in Alabama. She has taught undergraduate and graduate nursing students. She has revised and taught courses in the current Joint MSN program for both nurse practitioner and nurse educator students. Her areas of research and publications include improving knowledge and self-care to reduce readmission within 30 days for heart failure patients and academic support initiatives to retain nursing students.

Allison Terry, PhD, RN

Ph.D., Auburn University 2005
MSN, Troy University, 1990
BSN, Auburn University at Montgomery 1987

Bio and Research Interests: Dr. Terry is a tenured Associate Professor and Assistant Dean in the School of Nursing. She served as a legal consultant and Director for the Center for Nursing at the Alabama Board of Nursing. She has also held administrative positions with the Alabama Department of Mental Health. Dr. Terry has published one of the most well-used textbooks for Doctor of Nursing Practice students and faculty. In 2017, Dr. Terry published the third edition of *Clinical Research for the Doctor of Nursing Practice*, Sudbury MA: Jones & Bartlett.

Anita All, PhD, RN
Ph.D., University of Northern Colorado 1993
MSN, Clinical Nurse Specialist, University of Northern Colorado 1989
BSN, University of Wyoming 1986
Graduate Certificate in Gerontology, University of Northern Colorado

Bio and Research Interests: Dr. All is a tenured professor and has published in the area of quality of life and chronic pain, HIV, stress and coping. She is the recipient of multiple awards for her work with students, and her leadership in nursing. Dr. All provided leadership for the Joint AU/AUM master's program from 2006-2012.

Brandy Young, DNP, FNP-BC
DNP, South University 2016
MSN, Troy University, Family Nurse Practitioner 2012
BSN Auburn University at Montgomery, 2005

Bio and Research Interests: Dr. Young is a nationally certified family nurse practitioner. She is engaged in research related to obesity and self-management and health coaching. She is a practicing advanced-practice nurse, she has taught at the undergraduate and graduate levels and she continues to mentor graduate students in DNP and Master's Programs.

1) Please provide faculty counts for the proposed program:

Status	Faculty Type	
	Primary	Support
Current- Full Time	11	1
Current-Part Time	11	0
Additional-Full Time (to be hired)	0	0
Additional-Part Time (to be hired)	0	0

b) Briefly describe the qualifications of new faculty to be hired.

Two additional full-time doctorally prepared certified registered nurse practitioners will be hired to teach in the MSN program if approved. AUM is not

including these numbers in the budget or the above table as these new hires will replace existing lines already covered by the budget.

2. Equipment. Will any special equipment be needed specifically for this program?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If “Yes”, please list:

1. The Typhon software system allows students and faculty to track and record patient encounters. Students enter documentation, the amount of time spent with the patient, as well as demographic data on each patient encounter in the system. The system allows for daily, weekly, monthly and program patient encounters to ensure the student has met the program outcomes for the number of patients and time with patients.

NPST-Typhon Student Tracking System

Annual Subscription estimated:

- One-time fee for AUM SON \$250.00
- Annual fee for AUM SON \$250.00

2. The Pelvic Simulator is an advanced pelvic model allowing students to practice and develop appropriate skills for multiple pelvic assessments including vaginal examination, prostate examination and rectal examination. There are multiple simulated pieces that can be incorporated into the model to simulate fibroids, ovarian cyst, and others. It also allows faculty to develop scenarios to validate these assessment skills prior to the student performing these skills on patients. The pelvic model is anatomically correct and provides the student with actual finger sensation, a visual of the vagina/cervix, as well as guidance through the software on a computer screen to guide the student's movement during the pelvic/prostate/rectal exam.

3D Systems (Simbionix) Pelvic Mentor estimated \$40,000.00

3. The Welch Allyn PanOptic Ophthalmoscope provides the student with a better view of the fundus of the eye for examination and assessment. The eye can be an indicator of focused or systemic disease processes. Therefore, it is important to be able to appropriately identify and evaluate the anatomy of the eye. Welch

Allyn PanOptic Ophthalmoscope estimated \$450.00

4. iHuman is a software program that provides the faculty member with the ability to initiate case studies, develop differential diagnoses, as well as track physical assessment skills for the student.

iHuman Patients Software estimated \$3,000.00

5. Fitzgerald Health Education Associates is recognized as a leader in providing nurse practitioner education as well as evaluating program outcomes through exit exams for nurse practitioner students.

Fitzgerald University Resources estimated \$ 5,000.00

In-Depth Fitzgerald Testing Package

- Learning Resources
- Pre-testing/Post-testing
- Exit Exam

The cost of the new equipment should be included in the table following (Section K.).

3. Facilities. Will any new facilities be required specifically for the program?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", please list. Only new facilities need be listed. Their cost should be included in the table following (Section K.).

4. Library. Are there sufficient library resources to support the program?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Please provide a brief description of the current status of the library collections supporting the proposed program.

If "No", please briefly describe how any deficiencies will be remedied; include the cost in the table following (Section K.).

The Auburn University at Montgomery Library supports the nursing courses offered on the AUM campus. Additionally, in support of the MSN Program, the Library provides online access to specific databases such as the Cochrane Library. The AUM Library has a cooperative agreement with the libraries of Troy University, Alabama State University, Faulkner University and Huntingdon College. The AUM library participates in traditional interlibrary loan services and a special lending program with the libraries of Auburn University, Jacksonville State University, the University of Alabama, and the University of Alabama Birmingham. The program called ALLIES allows students to conduct simultaneous searches of the participating libraries catalogs and, once an item is identified, to place a request for that item. The holding library then retrieves the item and mails it to the home library of the student or faculty member. Over the past 5 years, the Library has made available to the School of Nursing a total of \$12,097.30 for book and DVD purchases.

There is an annual budget and process for nursing faculty to provide input regarding new purchases for the Library. The library also purchases serial subscriptions annually, as well as large interdisciplinary databases such as Science Direct, BioOne, and Oxford Journals. The library provides access to journal resources such as CINAHL Plus Text, which contains access to more than 3,000 journals, the Cochrane Library, Joanna Briggs Institute, ProQuest Nursing and Allied Health, Ovid Nursing Journals collection, and PubMed and PubMed Central, which provides indexing and abstracting for more than 3,500 titles in the medical and health sciences area.

5. Assistantships/Fellowships. Will you offer any assistantships specifically for this program?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If “Yes”, how many assistantships will be offered? Be sure to include the amount in the table following.

Number of assistantships offered

Be sure to include the cost of assistantships in the table following (Section K.).

6. Program Budget .The proposal projected that a total of in estimated new funds will be required to support the proposed program.

A projected total of \$ will be available to support the new program.

L. New Academic Degree Program Proposal Summary Form

- **In the following “NEW ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUMMARY” table, please provide a realistic estimate of the costs of the program.**
- **This should only include the additional costs that will be incurred, not current costs.**
- **Indicate the sources and amounts of funds available for the program’s support.**
- **DO NOT LEAVE ANY PORTION/SOURCES OF THE NEW FUNDS OR FUNDS AVAILABLE BLANK. ENTER “\$0” IF THERE ARE NO NEW FUNDS NEEDED OR NO FUNDS AVAILABLE.**
- **THERE MUST BE AN ACTUAL DOLLAR AMOUNT PROVIDED FOR TUITION, SINCE THOSE FIGURES REPRESENT PROJECTED ENROLLED STUDENTS.**
- **If it is stated that new funds are requested or if it is a reallocation of resources, please explain directly below from what source(s) the funds for the proposed new program, (e.g. faculty, equipment, etc.) will be attained.**
- **If tuition is used to support the program, what start-up revenue source will be used to initiate the program.**
- **Also, include enrollment and completer projections.**
- **New enrollment headcounts are defined as unduplicated counts across years. For example, if “Student A” would be initially enrolled in the program in year 2, and again is enrolled in the program in years 4 and 5; “Student A” is only counted in the new enrollment headcount in year 2.**
- **Total enrollment headcounts represent the actual number of students enrolled (both part-time and full time each year. This is a duplicated count).**

NEW ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUMMARY

INSTITUTION Auburn University at Montgomery

PROGRAM MSN

ESTIMATED NEW FUNDS REQUIRED TO SUPPORT PROPOSED PROGRAM

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	TOTAL
FACULTY	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
LIBRARY	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
FACILITIES	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
EQUIPMENT	<u>48,950.00</u>	<u>1750.00</u>	<u>1750.00</u>	<u>1750.00</u>	<u>1750.00</u>	<u>55,950.00</u>
STAFF	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
ASSISTANTSHIPS	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
OTHER	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	<u>48,950.00</u>	<u>1750.00</u>	<u>1750.00</u>	<u>1750.00</u>	<u>1750.00</u>	<u>55,950.00</u>

SOURCES OF FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR PROGRAM SUPPORT

	Year 1	Year 2	Year3	Year 4	Year 5	TOTAL
INTERNAL REALLOCATIONS	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
EXTRAMURAL	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TUITION	<u>\$26,359</u>	<u>\$48,493</u>	<u>\$72,876</u>	<u>\$114,306</u>	<u>\$130,332</u>	<u>\$392,366</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$26,359</u>	<u>\$48,493</u>	<u>\$72,876</u>	<u>\$114,306</u>	<u>\$130,332</u>	<u>\$392,366</u>

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS AND DEGREE COMPLETION PROJECTIONS

Note: "New Enrollment Headcount" is defined as unduplicated counts across years.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5-YEAR AVERAGE
FULL TIME HEADCOUNT	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>7.6</u>
PART TIME HEADCOUNT	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL HEADCOUNT	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>9.6</u>
NEW ENROLLMENT HEADCOUNT	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>6.2</u>
DEGREE COMPLETION PROJECTIONS	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	4-YEAR AVERAGE <u>4.25</u>

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MSN Plan of Study Nurse Educator Track

Fall Admission

Semester One	Semester Two	Semester Three
Theory for Advanced Nursing Practice (3)	Translating Evidence into Practice Systems (3)	Advanced Physical Assessment (2)
Professional Transition to Advanced Nursing Practice (3)	Advancing Quality, Safety, & Prevention (3)	Advanced Physical Assessment Clinical (1)
Ethics, Legal Issue & Health Policy (3)	Advanced Physiology/Pathophysiology (3)	Pharmacotherapeutics for Advanced Practice (3)
Semester Four	Semester Five	Semester Six
Theory & Strategies for Learning (3)	Using Quality Assessment & Evaluation Strategies (2)	Nurse Educator Practicum (4)
Innovations in Teaching & Evaluation (1)	Exam Construction & Analysis (2)	
Information Systems & Technology for Improved Healthcare (3)	Program Evaluation & Accreditation (2)	
Innovative Curriculum Development (3)		

MSN Plan of Study Family Nurse Practitioner Track

Fall Admission

Semester One	Semester Two	Semester Three
Theory for Advanced Nursing Practice (3)	Translating Evidence into Practice Systems (3)	Advanced Physical Assessment (2)
Professional Transition to Advanced Nursing Practice (3)	Advancing Quality, Safety, & Prevention (3)	Advanced Physical Assessment Clinical (1)
Ethics, Legal Issue & Health Policy (3)	Advanced Physiology/Pathophysiology (3)	Pharmacotherapeutics for Advanced Practice (3)
Semester Four	Semester Five	Semester Six
Adolescent/Adult Primary Care (2)	Women's Health Primary Care (2)	Gerontologic Primary Care (3)
Adolescent/Adult Primary Care Clinical (3) (180 hours)	Women's Health Primary Care (1) (60 hours)	Gerontologic Primary Care Clinical (2) (120 hours)
Diagnostic and Clinical Reasoning (1)	Program Evaluation & Accreditation (2)	Advanced Practice Practicum (3) (180 hours)
	Pediatric Primary Care (3)	
	Pediatric Primary Care Clinical (2) (120 hours)	



STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

Thomas M. Miller, M.D.
State Health Officer

March 16, 2017

Jean D. Leuner, PhD, RN, FAAN
Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O. Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

Dear Dr. Leuner:

On behalf of the Office of Community Affairs in the Alabama Department of Public Health, I am writing this letter to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders, and informaticists. These programs are needed locally in order to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

The demand for nurses is growing as the baby boom generation ages. At the same time, there is a shortage of nursing faculty due to retirements. Without enough qualified faculty to teach nursing students, the nursing shortage will most likely worsen.

We are delighted that AUM is planning for the future health care needs of the River Region by proposing both a masters and a doctoral program. The DNP and MSN Program proposed by AUM will also allow Alabama Department of Public Health and other state agency staff to attend classes while working full-time.

As we prepare for the future health care needs of our community and our state, we welcome the opportunity to support AUM as they develop the DNP and MSN programs. We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with AUM and we know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the transformative health care environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carolyn Bern".

Carolyn Bern, MPA
Director, Office of Community Affairs

CB/AM



Jean D. Leuner, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Barbara S. Witt Professor and Dean
Julie C. Freeman, DNP, ACNP-BC, MSN
Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
POB 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

March 16, 2017

Dear Dr. Leuner,

On behalf of the Alabama State Nurses Association, I am writing this letter to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These programs are needed locally in order to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

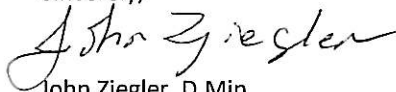
We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with AUM and we know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment upon graduation. There is a need for more nurses to be prepared at the graduate level in order to serve the community as nurse practitioners, nurse leaders and faculty. The shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a particular challenge since a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses.

We are pleased to see that AUM is planning for the future by proposing both a masters and a doctoral program. The DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses. A local program is needed so that our staff can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will also provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area.

As we address issues of quality, safety, access to care and new federal guidelines and requirements, we welcome the opportunity to support and work with AUM to propose the Master of Science in Nursing degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. We know that we will need nurses prepared at the graduate level to provide the expert care, leadership and maintain the quality standards that are essential for optimal patient care.

Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM in order to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for the community, state and the nation.

Sincerely,



John Ziegler, D.Min
ASNA Executive Director



Robin Barca
Senior Vice President and
Chief Operating Officer

Baptist Health

301 Brown Springs Road
PO Box 244001
Montgomery, AL 36124-4001
Tel.: 334-273-4400
Fax: 334-273-4407

March 7, 2017

Jean D. Leuner, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Barbara S. Witt Professor and Dean
Julie C. Freeman, DNP, ACNP-BC, MSN
Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O. Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

Dear Dr. Leuner,

On behalf of Baptist Health, I am writing this letter as both our continued commitment to the partnership that we have worked so hard to deepen and strengthen to serve our community, and to offer our support and strong encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These are vital programs that are needed locally in order to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

We have enjoyed a long and excellent relationship with AUM and value that tremendously. But especially since you have become Dean, we have seen such rapid advancement in curriculum development, program quality, and a vision for the future. We have been particularly impressed with how the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment that we are facing in our region. We have gone beyond a great relationship to one that is a true partnership, actively working together to address the nursing workforce needs for Central Alabama.

As you know, the nursing shortage is upon us and is deeper and more intense than we have ever seen before because of the intersection of retiring baby boomers that will also require more health services from the system of care. Because of this, there is a need for more nurses overall, but also for more to be prepared at the graduate level in order to serve as more effective nurse leaders within hospitals and across the continuum of care and as faculty. And we recognize that the shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a particular challenge since a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses. And certainly, with health care reform at full speed, the community will need additional advance practice nurses to meet the myriad of health challenges we have in Alabama.

We are pleased to see that AUM is planning for the future by proposing both a masters and a doctoral program. The DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses. A local program is needed so that our staff can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will also provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area.

As we address issues of quality, safety, access to care and new federal guidelines and requirements, we welcome the opportunity to support and work with AUM to propose the Master of Science in Nursing degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. We know that we will need nurses prepared at the graduate level to provide the expert care, leadership and maintain the quality standards that are essential for optimal patient care. I know it goes without saying, but we will fully support these programs and will continue to identify and provide sponsorship for nurses within our organization to become students.

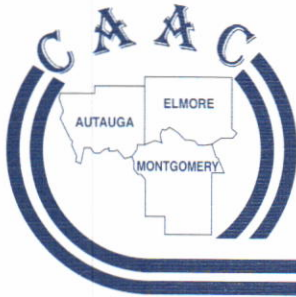
Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM in order to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for the community, state and the nation. I look forward to all we can accomplish together in the bright future we have because of our partnership!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'RB', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robin Barca, R.N., M.S.

Sr. Vice President / Chief Operating Officer



CENTRAL ALABAMA AGING CONSORTIUM

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A R E A A G E N C Y O N A G I N G

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Jean D. Leuner, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
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Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O.Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

March 13, 2017

Dear Dr. Leuner,

On behalf of *Central Alabama Aging Consortium*, I am writing this letter to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These programs are needed locally in order to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with AUM, and we know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment upon graduation. There is a need for more nurses to be prepared at the graduate level in order to serve the community as nurse practitioners, nurse leaders and faculty. The shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a particular challenge since a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses.

We are pleased to see that AUM is planning for the future by proposing both a masters and a doctoral program. The DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses. A local program is needed so that our staff can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will also provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area.

As we address issues of quality, safety, access to care and new federal guidelines and requirements, we welcome the opportunity to support and work with AUM to propose the Master of Science in Nursing degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. We know that we will need nurses prepared at the graduate level to provide the expert care, leadership and maintain the quality standards that are essential for optimal patient care.



Resource Center For Seniors



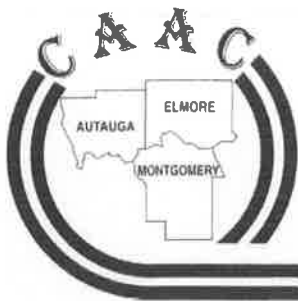
Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM in order to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for the community, state and the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Segrest".

Susan Segrest
Executive Director
Central Alabama Aging Consortium
Area Agency on Aging

/ss



CENTRAL ALABAMA AGING CONSORTIUM

2500 FAIRLANE DRIVE, SUITE 200
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36116

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

SUSAN SEGREST
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Phone: (334) 240-4666

Fax: (334) 240-4681

www.centralalabamaaging.org

Jean D. Leuner, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Barbara S. Witt Professor and Dean
Julie C. Freeman, DNP, ACNP-BC, MSN
Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O.Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

March 21, 2017

Dear Dr. Leuner,

On behalf of Central Alabama Aging Consortium's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, I am writing this letter to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These programs are needed locally in order to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with AUM and we know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment upon graduation. There is a need for more nurses to be prepared at the graduate level in order to serve the community as nurse practitioners, nurse leaders and faculty. The shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a particular challenge since a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses.

We are pleased to see that AUM is planning for the future by proposing both a masters and a doctoral program. The DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses. A local program is needed so that our staff can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will also provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area.

As we address issues of quality, safety, access to care and new federal guidelines and requirements, we welcome the opportunity to support and work with AUM to propose the Master of Science in Nursing degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. We know that we will need nurses prepared at the graduate level to provide the expert care, leadership and maintain the quality standards that are essential for optimal patient care.

Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM in order to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for the community, state and the nation.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Solomon



Resource Center For Seniors





Jean D. Leuner, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O.Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

March 7, 2017

Dear Dr. Leuner,

On behalf of Jackson Hospital, I am writing to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These programs are very much needed locally in order to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

We have an excellent relationship with AUM and know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment upon graduation. There is a real need for more advanced practice nurses at the graduate level in order to serve our community as nurse practitioners, nurse leaders and faculty. The shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a significant challenge since a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses.

We are pleased to see that AUM is planning for the future by proposing both a masters and a doctoral program. The DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses. A local program is especially needed so that our staff can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will also provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area.

As we address issues of quality, safety, access to care and new federal guidelines and requirements, we welcome the opportunity to support and work with AUM to propose the Master of Science in Nursing degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. We know that we will need nurses prepared at the graduate level to provide the expert care, leadership and maintain the quality standards that are essential for optimal patient care.

Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM in order to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for our community, state and the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sharon A. Goodison'.

Sharon A. Goodison RN, MSN, MBA
Vice President Patient Care Services/Chief Nursing Officer

1725 PINE STREET
MONTGOMERY, AL 36106-1117
334-293-8000
WWW.JACKSON.ORG

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Fred D. Hunker, M.D.
David R. Thrasher, M.D.
William P. Saliski, Jr., D.O.
Gaeton D. Lorino, M.D.
Lisa J. Williams, M.D.
S. Allen Ensminger, M.D.
Priyanka A. Vyas, M.D.

1440 Narrow Lane Parkway
Montgomery, Alabama 36111-2665
(334) 281-4140
FAX (334)281-4198

300 Taylor Road, Suite 200
Montgomery, Alabama 36117

April 10, 2017

Jean D. Leuner, PhD., RN, FAAN
Barbara S. Witt Professor and Dean
Julie C. Freeman, DNP, ACNP-BC, MSN
Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O. Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

Dear Dr. Leuner:

On behalf of Montgomery Pulmonary Consultants, I am writing this letter to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM.) We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These programs are needed locally in order to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with AUM and we know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment upon graduation. There is a need for more nurses to be prepared at the graduate level in order to serve the community as nurse practitioners, nurse leaders and faculty. The shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a particular challenge since a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses.

We are pleased to see that AUM is planning for the future by proposing both a masters and a doctoral program. The DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses. A local program is needed so that our staff can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will also provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area.

As we address issues of quality, safety, access to care and new federal guidelines and requirements, we welcome the opportunity to support and work with AUM to propose the Master of Science in Nursing degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. We know that we will need nurses prepared at the graduate level to provide the expert care, leadership and maintain the quality standards that are essential for optimal patient care.

Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM in order to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for the community, state and the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William P. Saliski, Jr.', written in a cursive style.

William P. Saliski, Jr., D.O.

WPSj/bab

Jean D. Leuner, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Barbara S. Witt Professor and Dean
Julie C. Freeman, DNP, ACNP-BC, MSN
Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O. Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

March 8, 2017

Dear Dr. Leuner:

On behalf of the Southeast Alabama Area Health Education Center (SEAAHEC), I am writing to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These programs are needed locally to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of the greater Montgomery, Alabama.

We enjoy an excellent relationship with AUM and we know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment upon graduation. There is a need for more nurses to be prepared at the graduate level to serve the community as nurse practitioners, nurse leaders and faculty. The shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a unique challenge as a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses.

We are pleased to see that AUM is proactive in proposing both a master's level and a doctoral program. A local program is needed so that students can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will also provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area. In addition, the DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses.

As we address issues of quality, safety, access to care and new federal guidelines and requirements, we welcome the opportunity to support and work with AUM to propose the Master of Science in Nursing degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. We know that we will need nurses prepared at the graduate level to provide the expert care, leadership and maintain the quality standards that are essential for optimal patient care.

Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM's need to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for the local community, state and the nation.

Sincerely,


Martha Davis Vignes
Executive Director

Southern Orthopaedic Surgeons *LLC.*

James H. Armstrong, M.D., FAAOS
Charles T. Fletcher, Jr., M.D., FAAOS, FACS
Michael E. Freeman, M.D., FAAOS, FACS
Roland A. Hester, IV, M.D., FAAOS, FACS
Joseph F. Curtis, Jr., M.D., FAAOS
N Tucker Mattox, Jr., M.D., FAAOS, FACS
Stephen W. Samelson, M.D., FAAOS
Christopher A. Heck, M.D., FAAOS
Jason T. Randall, M.D., FAAOS, FACS
R. Lee Murphy, Jr., M.D.
Robert E. Howell, III, M.D.

Emeritus

Mervel V. Parker, M.D.
Gary E. Phillips, M.D.
M. Bonner Engelhardt, M.D.
Paul D. Everest, M.D., Deceased
Samuel L. Miller, M.D., FAAOS, FACS
Donald F. Hodurski, M.D., FAAOS, FACS

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MAILING ADDRESS

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Jean D. Leuner, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Barbara S. Witt Professor and Dean
Julie C. Freeman, DNP, ACNP-BC, MSN
Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O.Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

March 24, 2017

Dear Dr. Leuner,

On behalf of Southern Orthopaedic Surgeons, LLC, I am writing this letter to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting stand-alone graduate and doctoral programs to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These programs are desperately needed locally in order to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with AUM and we know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment upon graduation. There is a need for more nurses to be prepared at the graduate level in order to serve the community as nurse practitioners, nurse leaders and faculty. The shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a particular challenge since a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses.

We are pleased to see that AUM is planning for the future by proposing both a masters and a doctoral program. The DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses. A local program is needed so that our staff can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will also provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area.

As we address issues of quality, safety, access to care and new federal guidelines and requirements, we welcome the opportunity to support

Southern Orthopaedic Surgeons *llc.*

James H. Armstrong, M.D., FAAOS
Charles T. Fletcher, Jr., M.D., FAAOS, FACS
Michael E. Freeman, M.D., FAAOS, FACS
Roland A. Hester, IV, M.D., FAAOS, FACS
Joseph F. Curtis, Jr., M.D., FAAOS
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and work with AUM to propose the Master of Science in Nursing degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. We know that we will need nurses prepared at the graduate level to provide the expert care and leadership, as well as maintain the quality standards that are essential for optimal patient care.

Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM in order to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for the community, state and the nation.

Sincerely,



Ryan Luchner, MBA
Chief Executive Officer
Southern Orthopaedic Surgeons, LLC
454 Taylor Road
Montgomery, AL 36117



The Respite Ministry

PURPOSE. MEANING. HOPE.

Daphne Johnston
Director of the Adult Respite Ministry
(An Alzheimer's Day Program)
First United Methodist Church
2416 W. Cloverdale Park Rd
Montgomery, AL 36111

Dear Dr. Leuner,

On behalf of the Adult Respite Ministry at First United Methodist Church, we would like to send our full support and encouragement for a MSN program and DNP program at AUM. These programs are needed desperately for the city of Montgomery in order to accommodate the growing need for baby boomer healthcare.

Our Respite Ministry serves 50 clients a week living with Alzheimer's in the River Region. I refer them to UAB Neurology all the time because we do not have adequate resources in Montgomery to help and educate these families on the various types of dementia. UAB has several nurse practitioners on staff that focus on dementia and take a holistic approach in treating the patient and caregiver. I dare say Montgomery needs more resources like this for all of our chronic diseases.

We have been working with Dr. Morris and AUM nursing students for five years now and would be delighted to be a learning field for dementia care for the proposed new programs. Our day program has drawn national attention from the Administration on Aging as an ideal community model for local cities in handling the Alzheimer's crisis. We would look forward to partnering with AUM programs in the future on how to serve our community with quality nurses and practitioners that could understand the severity of dementia.

It is paramount that Montgomery train more expert healthcare professionals. Our doctors are overrun now and many are retiring. We want to help in any way possible!

Thank you for the opportunity to help grow and prepare our nurses for the aging issues that will only multiply with the next generation.

Sincerely,

Daphne Johnston
Director of Respite Ministry

RESPITE MINISTRY AT FUMC MONTGOMERY, LLC
2416 W. CLOVERDALE PARK MONTGOMERY, AL 36106
334.834.8990 WWW.FUMCMONTGOMERY.ORG/RESPITE



The Wellness Coalition

Kimberly Edwards
Alabama Department of
Public Health Area 8

Ben F. Kelley
Baptist Health
Chairperson

Michael Briddell
City of Montgomery

Jessica Hudson
Community-at-Large
Representative
Chairperson-Elect

C. Bernell Mapp
Community-at-Large
Representative
Immediate Past Chairperson

Kara Watts
Community Care Network

Heather Johnson
Community Hospital

Gilbert Darrington
Health Services, Inc.

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Jackson Hospital

Mary Weidler
Joint Public Charity Hospital
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Molly Stone
Mid-Alabama Coalition for
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Henry Parker
Montgomery Area Mental
Health Authority

Lou Ialacci
Montgomery County
Treasurer

Connie King
Montgomery County Health
Department

Cynthia Bisbee, Ph.D.
Executive Director

March 21, 2017

Jean D. Leuner, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Barbara S. Witt Professor and Dean
Julie C. Freeman, DNP, ACNP-BC, MSN
Graduate Program Coordinator
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Auburn University at Montgomery
P.O. Box 244023
Montgomery, AL 36124

Dear Dr. Leuner,

On behalf of The Wellness Coalition, I am writing this letter to offer our support and encouragement for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). We understand that AUM is requesting a stand-alone graduate and doctoral program to prepare nurse practitioners, educators, nurse leaders and informaticists. These programs are needed locally to prepare graduate nurses for the growing healthcare community of greater Montgomery, Alabama.

We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with AUM and we know that the College of Nursing and Health Sciences graduates are well prepared for the complex healthcare environment upon graduation. There is a need for more nurses to be prepared at the graduate level to serve the community as nurse practitioners, nurse leaders and faculty. The shortage of faculty due to retirements presents a particular challenge since a well-educated workforce of faculty members is needed to prepare the next generation of nurses.

We are pleased to see that AUM is planning for the future by proposing both a master's and a doctoral program. The DNP degree is the nationally accepted terminal degree for nurse practitioners and other graduate nurses. A local program is needed so that our staff can attend classes while working full-time and have access to faculty members for advisement and other activities. It will provide a pathway for new graduates to continue their education locally and not leave the area.

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Thank you for the opportunity to support AUM to grow and prepare the graduate nurses needed for the community, the state and the nation.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Bisbee, Ph.D.
Executive Director